Governing Urban Land for Sustainable Development: Strategies for Equitable Access and Resource Management

Mustapahayuddin Abdul Khalim[1],Wan Zahari Wan Yusoff[2],Amilia Hasbullah[3],FaziraShafie[4]

[1,2,3]University of Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, Johor, Malaysia

[4]Department of Economics Krisnadwipayana University, Jakarta, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This exploration meticulously scrutinizes and reexamines the functioning of metropolitan property administration, maintainable progress supported by equitable frameworks and proficient, professional administration. It additionally helps address extant tests, for example, tenure lack of security, arrangement disappointments, natural degradation and harmonizing assorted lawful frameworks, including religious (Islamic) based developments, Indigenous Law and the Arctic. Worldwide case thinks about highlight changes in laws and the utilization of computerized devices, for example, GIS and archive enrolment. It additionally champions marginalized minority gatherings, for example, ladies and local networks. Going ahead, the procedure will zero in on multi-stakeholder joint effort to address environment change, urbanization and social disparity. Effective administration requires incorporative approaches, innovative headways and affectability in social settings for a hardy metropolitan future.

Keywords: urban governance, equitable access, sustainable development, legal reforms, digital tools, participatory management

INTRODUCTION

Context and Importance of Urban Land Governance

Urban land governance contributes significantly to sustainable urbanization by influencing land use, social equity, sustainable development, and economic performance in rapidly urbanizing regions. Governance must be actively involved in addressing recurring issues such as land tenure insecurity, inefficient land markets, policy fragmentation, and social inequities, to mention a few. On the global scene, Sardar ensured that her readers understood how cyberspace and the digital world represented the dark side of the Western nations by indirectly influencing urban land matters through information flow, control, and social considerations. From Sardar's perspective, it was clear that urban land governance not only touched on legal and procedural aspects of the issue but also encompassed socio-cultural considerations that defined urban structures and legal frameworks. More recently, Maclin et al. highlighted the importance of developing clear legal and institutional frameworks to guide land titling and tenure in urban areas. Land tenure insecurity inhibits the real estate business and promotes social inequalities and limits on affordable housing. When unchecked, tenure insecurity limits one's ability to enter the real estate business, coupled with complicated legal processes and the overlapping of titling systems, especially in post-colonial societies. Wan Marhaini et al. offered a similar socio-cultural perspective on urban matters in their analysis of the factors influencing non-Muslim's desire to use Islamic Financial Services. They also indicated that social matters often manifest as limited access to land and financial instruments.

Similarly, Al-Ossmi & Ahmed (2016) studied land tenure management in Iraq and demonstrate the importance of legal reforms and building institutional capacity as a way of securing land rights and ensuring transparency. They show that successful land governance must be well-bodied in the law, but also must be open to change in response to developments in the social economy and climate contingencies.

Apart from legal arrangements, the contribution of other market regulation and planning tools is evident in some studies: for instance, Galehan (2019) addressed instruments such as land registration systems, zoning laws and

participatory planning mechanisms. These instruments are needed to promote transparent, fair, and sustainable land management. Furthermore, Rosti et al. (2020) analysed land governance in particular sectors (for example, mineral extraction), and concluded that" sustainable land governance has to also take into account environmental and social concerns, especially in resources-based sectoral investments".

Lastarria-Cornhiel (1997) provides an eloquent account of the social dimension of land, discussing how privatization affects the gender and property rights in Africa. This research highlights the importance of gender equity and social justice to be considered in governance reform in order to promote equitable development.

Environmental issues are also entangled in land governance. Woś et al. (2023) cited problems in post-mining land uses, stating that the sustainability of landscapes should be maintained through effective management and bottom-up approaches for reclamation practices to prevent environmental degradation and loss of fertility.

In urban settings, Payne (2001) compared land titles and land rights, and called for broader land tenure to be more accepting of culturally diverse tenure systems, acknowledging that customary ways of living on and with land are frequently contested. His research implies that supple governance arrangements are needed to fit into local contexts, yet not to be at odds with wider sustainable development agendas.

The need for policy intervention is emphasized by Dey (1982) who studies the views of farmers and planners in The Gambia, showing a discrepancy between what is intended as policy and reality. Closing these gaps involves participation mechanisms and policy change which engages local communities and stakeholders.

Therefore, the global sustainability challenge of urbanland governance itself is the balance of institutional (legal and administrative), social (equity), environmentaland market (private) interest. The complexity of these challenges requires comprehensive approaches that can be applied in a variety of social, cultural, and economic environments.

METHODOLOGY

This comprehensive article aims to provide a thorough overview of the existing literature regarding urban land governance strategies for sustainable development. It examines topics such as equitable access to resources, effective management practices, necessary legislative changes, and innovative solutions. A systematic methodology was employed to locate, analyze, and synthesize pertinent academic works, case studies, and policy evaluations. The applied technique was designed to ensure a clear, exhaustive, and applicable analysis. It was based on established guidelines for conducting systematic literature reviews, such as adapting the PRISMA framework to allow for narrative combining of relevant materials.

LITERATURE SEARCH STRATEGY

A multi-pronged approach was utilized to uncover a wide array of peer-reviewed works including articles, books, reports, and policy papers relevant to the review. Academic databases and research platforms such as Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, JSTOR, and ResearchGate were scoured. The goal was to source topical matters across various arenas including urban studies, property law, environmental science, economics, and cultural investigations. Based on the core themes, pivotal keywords and probing phrases were devised. These incorporated: "municipal land administration," "tenurial vulnerability," "equitable land access," "long-lasting land management," "Islamic property regulations," "conventional land rights," "Artik legislation," "authorized reforms in land policy," "grassroots land administration," and "technological progressions in land governance." Boolean operators like AND, OR, and NOT were applied to refine searches. To illustrate, ("urban land governance" AND "sustainable progress") OR ("land tenure" AND "Islamic law").

The search only considered materials from 1980 to 2025 to include both fundamental works and emerging trends. While English sources were preferred, multi-lingual summaries were included when applicable (such as for Islamic law studies). We obtained gray literature such as reports from international organizations (like UN-Habitat and the World Bank) directly from their internet sites to supplement peer-reviewed resources. By tracking citations forward and backward, we examined landmark papers (such as Payne, 2001; Lastarria-Cornhiel, 1997) to find additional references. Over 150 sources were initially reviewed, with this evaluation

citing 35 particularly influential sources.

Criteria for Selecting and Excluding Sources

We established a set of standards to ensure the sources we considered aligned with the goals of this review. To be incorporated, a study had to: (1) be pertinent to urban land governance, equitable access, or sustainable resource management; (2) provide empirical, theoretical, or case-based evidence from diverse global regions (such as Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America); (3) appear in reputable academic journals, publications, or policy outlets; and (4) address legal (Islamic, customary, statutory), social (gender equality, community participation), environmental (degradation, climate resilience), or technological aspects.

Sources were excluded if they: (1) did not relate to land administration (for example, those solely examining agriculture or rural issues without implications for urban areas); (2) consisted of opinions lacking a research foundation or academic merit; (3) were redundant or dated prior to 1980 without founding significance; or (4) had questionable methodology or an unclear contribution to our themes. A rubric based on the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme evaluated work quality, assessing validity, reliability, and applicability. Only submissions scoring over 70% on the rubric were retained.

Data Extraction and Synthesis

Carefully extracting important details from sources involved writing down information like authorship, year of publication, methodology used such as case studies or qualitative analysis, primary findings, geographic focus, and implications for managing urban land. Using qualitative analysis software (NVivo), we constructed a thematic matrix organizing extracts into four major themes: challenges involving policy failures and tenure insecurity, existing legal frameworks integrating Islamic and civil law, implemented strategies such as policy reforms and technological tools, and envisioned future directions regarding climate adaptation and participatory planning.

Given the qualitative nature of the literature, synthesis occurred through narrative and thematic comparison. Patterns, gaps, and exemplary practices emerged instead of quantitative meta-analysis. We contrasted different situations like those in Iraq and Nigeria regarding legal pluralism and across disciplinary fields to discern similarities and differences. Intentionally sourcing a variety of materials lessened biases from potential overrepresentations of specific regions like Africa. The synthesis focused on applicable insights for policymakers to practically support long-term urban development based on catalogued information.

This method ensured review fairness and fact-basis while linking theoretical concepts to real-world utility. It also acknowledged publication bias possibilities and the evolving state of land governance literature.

Refining Literature for Urban Land Governance

- **Database Search** — Utilizing academic databases for relevant materials
- **Keyword Refinement** — Applying Boolean operators to refine search terms
- **Temporal Filtering** — Limiting sources to 1980-2025 for relevance
- **Gray Literature Inclusion** — Incorporating reports from international organizations
- **Citation Tracking** — Identifying additional sources through citation analysis

Objectives of the Review

The objective of this review is to bring together existing approaches instruments, institutional and legal context regarding urban land governance and to identify best practices and gaps for policy prioritization. There will be a focus on legal systems, including Islamic law and modern codified law, and traditional customary land rights.

Reconciling with Islamic law, as explained by Al-Dawoody et al. (2021), provides valuable reflection on ethics and religion on land ownership, inheritance and management in Muslim communities. These views shape attitudes toward land tenure and mechanisms for resolving disputes, and suggest the need to integrate religious and traditional law into formal legal systems.

Like wise, the Artik law and other customary law which operates alongside formal laws is a recognized asubject of justice particularly in indigenous and rural settings. Having a fair appreciation for these existing legal norms can be important when we are designing governance systems that are sensitive to culture and are effective.

Innovative strategies like digital land registries, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), participatory planning, community driven land initiatives, etc. will also be critically examined in the review. These approaches are considered to have a promising potential to increase transparency, participation and sustainability management.

Dealing with these problems in a comprehensive manner will help facilitate better policy making, legislative reform and institutional development. In the end, this is about developing governance mechanisms that will ensure that land is used equitably, that possible losers are protected and that we can manage urban growth without putting pressure on the land such as caused by climate change, urban sprawl, or the internet of things.

The challenges faced today in local land governance are multidimensional, with an in-depth basis in insecurity of tenure, in efficiency of policies, in degradation of the parallel environment, and in the intricate interrelationship among laws and cultures. These issues limit the development of a sustainable city and increase social disparities, so it's necessary for policymakers, the legal profession and the community to fully understand these problems and to solve them as a whole.
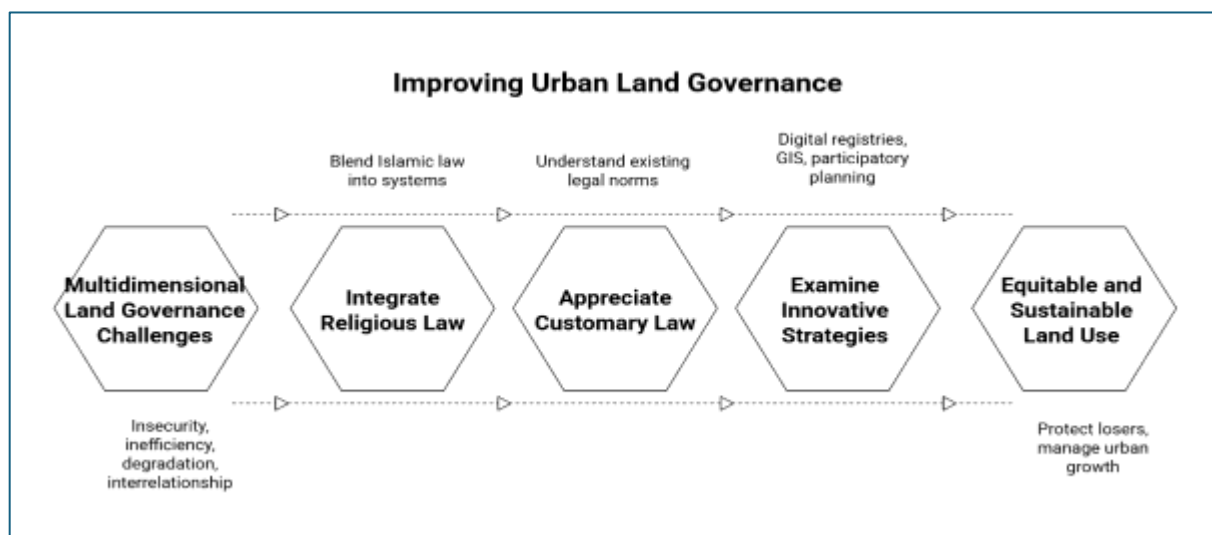
Land Tenure and Insecurity

Insecurity of tenure is one of the fundamental challenges facing urban land governance – investments in land are undermined by the lack of security of tenure; social stability is affected, and access to land is constrained by the poor and marginal. Maclin et al. (2017) emphasised that the lack of security of tenure undermines security for communities and restricts economic activities related to land. In a study carried out in western Sudan, Kevane (1997) showed how land tenure systems, notably land rentals, expose farmers and town-dwellers to vulnerabilities which in turn result in conflicts and distrust in formal land institutions.

Rosti et al. (2023) studied soil carbon sequestration in post-mining site, and found that insecure tenure and

unclear land right are determining factors of land use that result in soil degradation. Likewise, Zahreddine and El Ayoubi (2023) put forward the cause-and-effect relationship of tenure conflict on fair land distribution by underlining how insecurity fosters social disruption, displacement and vulnerability pushing social groups into poverty.

In much of the urban context, struggles over land rights are compounded by competing formal and customary land systems, that may function according to diverging principles and legal criteria. This duality can generate confusion and tension, especially with respect to customary versus statutory rights, that while commonly favoring local communities can be endangered through urban expansion policies (Sardar, 1995; Kar et al., 2025). Tenure insecurity is heightened when customary rights are not recognised in law and this entrenches social injustice.

Policy and Market Failures

Unsuccessful land use policy and uncontrolled land market become the big problems inhibiting the process of sustainable urban development. Interpreting the realintent of obscure or anachronistic urban land tenure policies (such as the central concern of this paper), Payne (2001) contends, generally favours local elites at the expense of thegreater community. These policies can reinforce disadvantage and act as a barrier to affordable urban land for low-income people.

On et al. (2024) took a closer look at logistics and supply chain management innovations, but also noticed the policy discrepancies in land regulation that do not contribute to strict organization of efficient urban infrastructure. Inadequate control of land market causes land speculation, soaring land prices, and marginalization of the poor in land tenure.

The effects of these failures can be seen in the world's cities where sham land transactions, fishy enforcement of zoning ordinances, and absentee land-use decision making have brought Skype-line squatter belts and zones of environmental ruination (Galehan, 2019). Examples of best practices from across the world are integrated land use planning, transparent land registration systems, and policy formulation process which considers the needs of the poor and marginalized.

Environmental and Social Impacts

Environmental exposures as a result of poor land use are emerging in urban areas. Woś et al. (2023) further discussed the persistent impacts of soil reclamation projects, also known as unreclaimed post-mining sites, on land instability, biodiversity loss, and pollution, specifically on marginal populations.

Meanwhile, Lastarria-Cornhiel (1997) analyzed the gendered effects of privatization of land in Africa, highlighting the discriminant impact that women's rights to land have upon the present social inequality, food insecurity and vulnerability to environmental shocks. Unsustainable urban expansion and inadequate planning contribute towards land degradation and further worsen these problems, making these communities more vulnerable.

Urban sprawl also generates environmental risks, including flooding, pollution and loss of green spaces, that tend to affect low-income communities more severely than others. This points out the urgency of implementing sustainable land management addressing environmental risk and social injustice.

Legal and Cultural Dimensions

Dual systems of land tenure create complicated legal and cultural problems. Sardar (1995) talked about the impact of Western ideas of civilization which serve to mold how land rights are thought of, and how indigenous and customary claims to land are typically discarded. They are rooted in communal property relations, social solidarity and local normativity, yet often condemned by the state-centred legal tradition.

Kar et al. (2025) stressed the need for the recognition of customary tenure within formal legal systems, particularly in woodland and rural areas with increasing urbanization pressure. Their case study in Jharkhand,

India, demonstrated how conflicts occurred when traditional rights are not recognized or respected by the urban land management regime.

Al-Dawoody et al. (2021) provided insights on the principles of Islamic law on land management, highlighting justice, charity, or well-being of society. They highlighted how Islamic jurisprudence could play a role in ensuring just distribution of land and condemning land grabbing practices. Yet, the unification between these dissimilar legal religions is hard to achieve taking to an account different normative premises and institutional designs.

Balancing customary, religious, and formal legal ideologies is a complex task and in urban and multicultural areas diverse parties come with competing claims and expectations to land rights. Consequently, legal pluralism requires participatory governance structures that respect local practices and at the same time promote transparency and equity.

Complementary interventions such as new technology that facilitates land registration (Ngo & Fashu, 2015) and policy changes that closely reflect international instruments are essential in dealing with such complicated interplays. Taken together, addressing these challenges calls for multi-dimensional legal, policy, and social responses that build the foundations for resilient, just, and sustainable systems of urban land governance.

Comparative Framework of Legal Systems

Aspect	Islamic Law	Artik Law	Customary Law
Core Principles	Divine trust, equity, contracts (e.g., Waqf for endowments)	Formal registration, zoning, dispute resolution	Community-based, cultural norms, communal ownership
Strengths	Promotes social justice, intergenerational equity	Enhances transparency, reduces conflicts	Reflects local values, fosters solidarity
Challenges	Reconciliation with state laws, varying interpretations	May overlook cultural contexts	Vulnerable to urban expansion, lack of formal recognition
Role in Urban Governance	Ensures fair distribution in Muslim areas	Supports efficient markets and planning	Aids inclusive, participatory management

This table highlights distinct roles, aiding integration for sustainable governance.

Legal and Institutional Frameworks

Land law in many Muslim-dominant countries is significantly influenced by Islamic law. The principles of divine rights, the responsibility of the (Muslim) community, and equitable sharing are expressed in a series of contractual and ownership rights proscribed by Islamic law. As argued by Al-Dawoody et al. (2021), Islamic law is based on the principle of Haq al-'Aqd (Right of contract) and Mulk (ownership) where the land is considered a trust (Amanah) which must be used responsibly. Often, the allocation of land rights under Islamic law falls under Bay' (sale), Waqf (endowment), and Hibah (gift) which determine the rules of transfer and inheritance, and secure land rights intergenerationally and at the same time the social equity. Islamic law influences reduction of hoarding, and aims to ensure equitable access to land resources according to it general equity maxim (Al-Dawoody et al., 2021).

Additionally, Islamic law calls for clear ownership and disallows wrongful intrusion, hence forming the basis

for sustainable land management. Incorporating Islamic teachings in modern land governance can help in ensuring social justice and equitable distribution of access (particularly in predominantly Muslim populated regions)). Nevertheless, the application of these principles sometimes needs to be reconciled to state legal systems, adjusting for civil laws and land reforms (Al-Dawoody et al., 2021).

Apart from the Islamic code, the Artik code in terms of the regulation of land interests contains sectional legal norms that make provision for strict rules, with a focus on the social and economic control over property rights protection. While there are few details available from the matrix specific to the Artik law, it generally resembles in some circles of formal land law in advocating for clear legal rights, registration, and dispute resolution. Publications that includeGalehan (2019)show that legal reforms which focus on land registration and zoning have facilitated the formalisation of land rights, reduced conflict, and improved the efficiency of land market. Such laws contribute to transparency and are critical tools in the hands of government to enhance land governance.

Land tenure is regulated within formal legal frameworks through different methodologies that include administrative registration mechanisms, and elaborate statutory provisions. In Iraq, Al-Ossmi and Ahmed (2016) explained how land tenure administration has developed over time to create a regulatory framework that will secure land rights and efficiently control urban land supply. The Iraqi approach focuses on legal registration, regularization of land tenure, and deliberative institutions to address tenure insecurity, particularly during the post-conflict period. Also in Nigeria, Alegwu (1983) investigated customary and statutory land tenure, focusing on how customs were interfaced with statutory laws. Nigeria's land tenure system is characterised by the mingling of statutory land registration and customary land rights, which differ by location. As the study by Alegwu indicates, reflecting the statutory ambition of uniformity, regional customs and practices tend to be subservient to local land management, indicating the need for integrated systems through which traditional lands rights are accommodated, and, at the same time, encouraging formal, public land rights.

There are differences between the two methods. The legal reforms in Iraq respond to state-oriented control, legal registration and centralized administration that are considered to be the requirements of current land administration. Nigeria's system is one of pluralism, including customary rights alongside statutory law; this is inclusive in scope but problematic in terms of harmonising, and bringing into conflict, these diverse sources.

Policy instruments and land tools are essential for implementing land laws and encouraging good land governance. Land registration, zoning and law reform are particularly important instruments. Galehan (2019) describes an example from the construction materials sector, showing how large scale, systematic registration and regulation of land can lead to the pursuit of sustainable land use and market stability. Likewise, Treviño and Murillo-Sandoval (2021) show that land register transparency and the success of policy interventions in Mexico have increased land tenure security, facilitated investment in land, and diminished conflicts among the reform beneficiaries.

In action, land registries offers a basis to support the rule of law, formalize land transactions and to deters conflict establishing a record of ownership. Use policies, implemented through zoning laws have the effect of promoting urban growth as well as preserving the most environmentally sensitive places. To accommodate demographic shifts, urbanization and climate effects, legal reforms including in land laws and re-definition of land rights are required. Together, these agreements all support the sustainable management of land, enhance social equity, and contribute to conflict resolution.
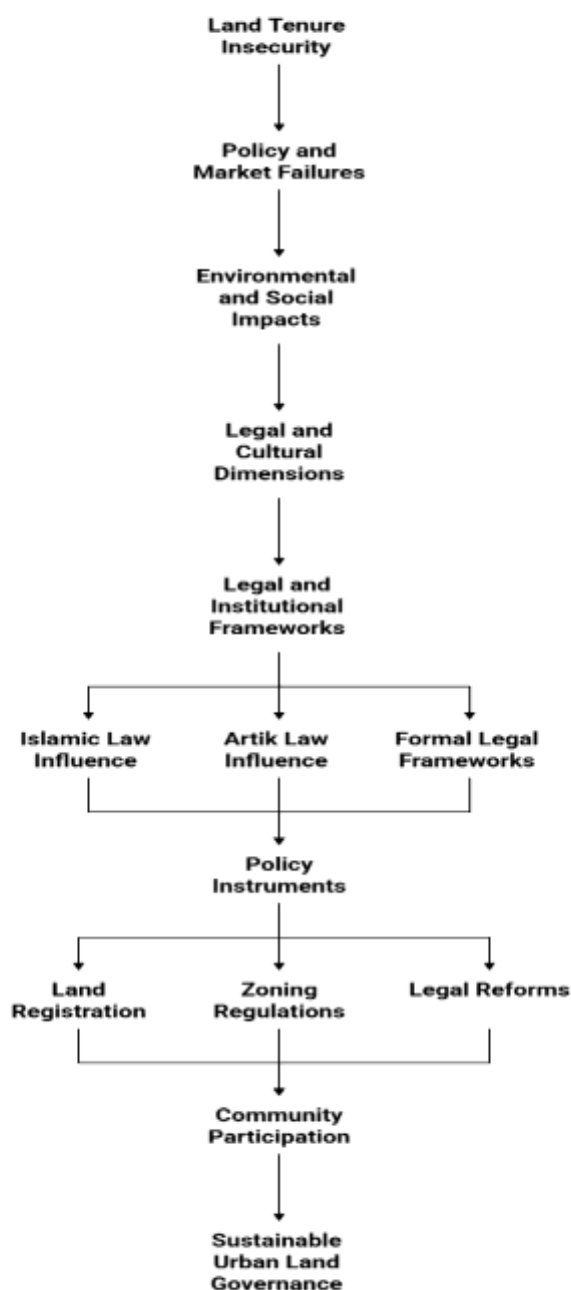
Further discussion from other applicable articles also highlight the necessity of participation. For example, local land governance projects using a mix of custom and statute have shown promise as ways to make inclusion sustainable. Mechanisms including land tribunals and local-norm–based and legal-reform–based mechanisms of dispute resolution have been successful in advancing resolution of land conflicts and tenure security.

Multiple layers of land governance require a multifaceted response, comprising on the one hand, legal reforms and institutional strengthening, and on the other hand, community participation. Realistically, an efficient legal landscape should encompass Islamic laws, over time-honoured practices, and statutes, to put in place a complete, fair and enduring system of land management. Crucial tools such as land registration, zoning regulations, and

legal reforms need to be customized to local conditions, yet follow a universal minimum standard for land rights security. The use of modern management tools such as digital land records and GIS is expected to bring about greater transparency and efficiency, thereby augmenting land governance systems even more.

So, in conclusion, the legal and institutional frameworks relating to land rights are diverse, ranging from religious to customary practices, formal law and statutes all having a say in land rights. Islamic law provides a doctrine based on social justice and focuses on a fair distribution and responsible holding. The system of land regulation differs from country to country, such as Iraq's central reforms and Nigeria's pluralist system. Policy instruments that includes land registry and zoning, are essential operational tools required for efficient management of resources and conflict resolution. The further development of these frameworks using technology and participatory processes may however contribute to urban land governance that is more just and sustainable.

Urban Land Governance Challenges and Solutions

Land Tenure Insecurity

Policy and Market Failures

Environmental and Social Impacts

Legal and Cultural Dimensions

Legal and Institutional Frameworks

Islamic Law Influence — Artik Law Influence — Formal Legal Frameworks

Policy Instruments

Land Registration — Zoning Regulations — Legal Reforms

Community Participation

Sustainable Urban Land Governance

Strategies for Equitable Land Access and Resource Management

Policy Interventions and Reform

Equitable access to land and sustainable use of the resources require effective policy interventions. At the heart of these reforms is an increase in land tenure security that alleviates conflicts, encourages investment and helps with social equity. Payne (2001) underscores the necessity to reform land tenure policy and move from fragile customary rights to secure rights in the form of titles, which would provide protection for the marginalized. Dey (1982) also emphasizes that development planning should involve a union of planners' goals and farmers' perceptions, favoring a participatory policy-making and the reintegration of local practices and knowledge. These are to include the development of transparent and accessible land registration, the reform of zoning laws to support a more equitable distribution of land, and transparent regulation of land markets.

Aside from tenure security, there are inefficiencies that need to be addressed in the land market. In this direction, land markets are informal, corrupt and non-transparent in many cases, leading to the unequal access to land. Rosti et al. (2023) highlight the importance of well-regulated land markets as part of transparent legal environments that ensure equity and the rights of soft targets. Land-value taxation, land pooling and better enforcement in law can moderate speculation in land and land monopolization.

This should go beyond to address past injustices and achieving access for marginalised groups, including indigenous people and women. Land redistribution, for instance, and participatory resource management also effectively lead to improved social equity outcomes as shown by Treviño and Murillo-Sandoval (2021). Reforms should also take into account climate resilience, by incorporating environmental safeguards into land policies.

Community-based and Customary Land Management

Power Relations and Customary Land Systems It is critical to take into account the role of customary land systems in the development of inclusive land governance frameworks. Sabar et al. 2023) point out that in many contexts, especially in Africa and Asia, customary practices rule the land and operate alongside formal legal systems. These indigenous systems are generally a reflection of rich cultural values and social norms and serve as a source of identity and social solidarity. The integration of traditional land rights into mainstream legal frameworks is also difficult, and involves a process of both negotiation and the recognition of local practice.

Approaches to the merging of customary and formal models have been tested through participatory land registration, community mapping and co-management. Rosti et al. (2020) suggest some cases in which community land registries in Ghana and Ethiopia have helped to ensure tenure security and natural resource sustainability. That's because such approaches enlist local community members in marking boundaries, keeping records and resolving disputes, while granting themselves jurisdiction.

Further, the community land trusts (CLTs) present an example of how land might collectively be managed, particularly in built-up areas. CLTs put the community in charge of how land is used and developed, which promotes long-term affordability and social cohesiveness. They are now reinforced by governmental and NGO programmes that offer a legal framework and training.

Innovative Management Approaches

There is a revolution underway in land management brought about by technological advances. The use of digital land registries, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and remote sensing facilitates more transparent, efficient, and accurate land governance. Ngo and Fashu (2015) explain how participatory GIS can enable local communities to map land resources and in so doing empower these communities to influence decision-making.

Digital handles real time updates, it brings down corruption and facilitates ease of transaction making land market more accessible and fairer. Especially, when computerized cadastre system combining digital parcel map and ownership database can enhance the level of tenure security and simplify the procedure of resolving conflicting rights cause of conflict.

Participatory planning methods such as mobile applications and online platforms for inclusive engagement enable previously marginalized groups to express their demands influencing land policies. They are especially effective in fast-growing urban settings, where conventional forms of land governance are frequently inadequate.

Besides, modern methods such as satellite-based monitoring and use of blockchain technology can also be explored for creating clear, immutable land records. Blockchain's distributed ledger checks fraud and allows secure, low-cost transactions among all participants.

Legal and Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations of land management require facing the questions of justice, fairness, and respect for traditional and cultural values. Blaikie (2008) criticizes the traditional models of development because in many cases they do not take into account the concepts of social justice for which advocates participatory and rights based models.

Legal systems that regulate body and land rights must maintain moral compass all the time in that marginalized sections don't get dispossessed and displaced. De Caro et al. (2024) note that the reform of land governance should be guided by international and national legal norms, also human rights instruments.

There needs to be an awareness of local situations and traditions of law when bringing together formal law and practice. It means recognizing indigenous and local land rights, without which are often established prior to the imposition of colonial or state systems and then accorded legal recognition and protection within overarching land management regimes.

In addition, ethical issues relate to sustainability of environment (land use contributes to resilience, biodiversity conservation and mitigation measures to face with climate change). Intersectoral transparent decision-making processes are the support of rights of the future generations and a means of gaining confidence of stakeholders.

Case Studies and Best Practices

Models of the operation of land governance In a way, best practice in land governance is a useful framework for projects that promote equitable access. Rosti et al. (2020) underscore the Land Governance in Africa Program that promotes management consortia, transparent registration and community participation to enhance the security of tenure and sustainability of resources.

Galehan (2019) on the other hand, talks about reforms in land registration process in Kenya, which entailed digitization and community participation and led to decrease in land related disputes and fair resource allocation. Likewise, multi-stakeholder platforms that include government, local communities, and the private sector can promote sustainable land use (Treviño and Murillo-Sandoval 2021).

In Latin America, participatory land-use planning programmes in Colombia have effectively integrated legal reform with community involvement, resulting in upgraded infrastructure and social justice.

LBD technologies including online e-Gov solutions, mobile applications, and GIS-related services are being implemented in various African and Asian countries to promote policy and administrative transparency to combat corruption in land administration.

Among the ecological interventions, community-based reforestation projects have successfully restored denuded areas without violating local land rights.

Nor have rights in these norms been fundamentally challenged in a large number of which have even been incorporated in formal legal systems as observed in a number of African States and to some extent has ensured tenure security and enhanced social solidarity.

Policies currently being developed in the EU and ASEAN countries can provide references for pursuit of the

inclusive and sustainable land governance.

Basically, the successful land governance models are that which fuse legal reforms, technological innovations, community involvement and respect for traditional practices. [These methods] become more applied in ways that are locally appropriate – in social/ cultural, environmental, and economic terms.

Community-driven restoration demonstration projects can then inform landscape process models, essentially turning them into a two-way test between theory and practice, in order to produce robust best practices, policy and theory.

Implications and Policy Recommendations The future of Urban Land Governance must be forward thinking, and consider the complex challenges, derived from global trends, and technological change and sociocultural shifts that are shaping urban life. The more and more intense effects of climate change, urbanization pressures and technological advancements all require a more integrated type of land policy and management focused on resilience, inclusiveness and sustainability.

New threats like climate change will dramatically change land use, particularly in urban areas. Woś et al., 2023) point out that land rehabilitation on post-mining sites as a form of carbon sequestration can be effectively modeled in the context of climate-resilient land management, and ecological restoration and sustainable land use planning are crucial to alleviate some of the more severe impacts on the environment. The land pressure increases due to rapid expansion of urban areas, resulting in the conflicts between rights and environmental degradation and social disparities. Noor et al. (2024) stress that technology innovation such as digital land registries, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and blockchain enabled land ownership records are shaping the land governance terrain. Such mechanisms ease transparency, reduce corruption and improve accuracy of land management, and have the potential to contribute to better resource allocation and intra-societal conflict mitigation.

To make the most of these technological tools, legal reforms ought to invest in them. The legal framework around land rights, particularly in complex settings such as Islamic law, Artik law, and formal state policy, requires continuous support and flexibility. Al-Ossmi and Ahmed (2016) show that despite the ongoing changes in land tenure systems in Iraq, tenure security is often undermined by a lack of enforcement of, and clarity on land tenure. Similarly, de Caro et al. (2024) regarding the need to express equivalence of the legal and ethical standards across jurisdictions in order to manage, both for land and for human remains, can be analogously extended to land rights and property laws (see also (1076)): for decreasing the ambiguities and contradictions it is necessary to clarify and to harmonize different traditions in law.

Elsewhere, customary tenure systems live side by side with formal laws in an effective reform should strive to marry customary and statutory rights. Sabar et al. (2023) show that customary community land management systems can complement formal systems, if properly recognized and supported. This local integration promotes participation, cultural rights and the effectiveness and legitimacy of land governance.

Ensuring sustainable and equitable growth requires participatory, inclusive policies addressing social and gender dimensions. Lastarria-Cornhiel (1997) analyzes the implications of land privatization in Africa and the need to undertake gender-sensitive reforms that respect women´s rights, particularly in customary rights to land. Morsi (2003) also argues that state-led movements are the appropriate way to achieve urban land and housing equity, and that development policy has to be inclusionary to deal with socio-economic differences.

Public participation and gender equality are essential for the formulation of efficient land policies. Policy interventions such as community land trusts, participatory zoning, and gender-sensitive land registration programs can help empower excluded populations and decrease inequities. Such approaches ought to be no less enshrined in formal legal and policy reform to ensure sustainability.

Moreover, technological advances increasingly help in the search for equitable and sustainable land management. Digital applications, open-source GIS and participatory mapping have demonstrated the potential of improving data transparency and community involvement. Ngo and Fashu (2015), for instance, elaborate on

the position of PGIS in land planning and show how technology could help to democratize decision-making and empower local communities to take ownership of their own land development projects.

Refinements to legal and ethical issues in land management should also be further developed. Blaikie's (2008) work draws attention to the ethical aspects of land rights, focusing in particular on the context of marginalised communities. Similarly, de Caro et al. (2024) emphasize the 'body politics' of body and land rights within the context of brothels, extending the metaphor of body to land governance, the deployment of which is 'to maintain dignity, to respect human rights, and to respect environmental integrity'.

Best practices in legal reform and justice management are highlighted in case study material from a range of countries. Galehan (2019) discusses productive urban land tenure reform, including strong legally recognized land titles and flexible zoning laws with community engagement. Treviño and Murillo-Sandoval (2021) demonstrate how progressive policy instruments, such as legal recognition of indigenous land rights, have enhanced resource governance and social harmony.

To tackle these future challenges, interdisciplinary and multi-stakeholder frameworks are necessary. It is also necessary for governments, local community, law, and academia experts, and international organizations to work together to create flexible policies that can be adjusted to environmental, technological, and social developments. [There are also] a variety of multi-stakeholder platforms to engage in dialogue, harmonisation of policies and shared responsibility related to land governance.

It is imperative that investment is made into ongoing legal reform, capacity-building and engagement with stakeholders. Reform should foreground tenure security, environmental fit, social justice and technological fit. The policies should also build resilience to the impacts of climate, help to control urban sprawl and to correct for past injustices or systemic biases.

In summary, the land governance of the future has to be flexible, inclusive and innovative. Through technological innovations, legal reforms, inclusion of customary practices and promotion of participatory processes, land management can be adapted to respond to the urgent need for sustainable urban development and social justice, ensuring that the resources of the land benefit the present and the future.
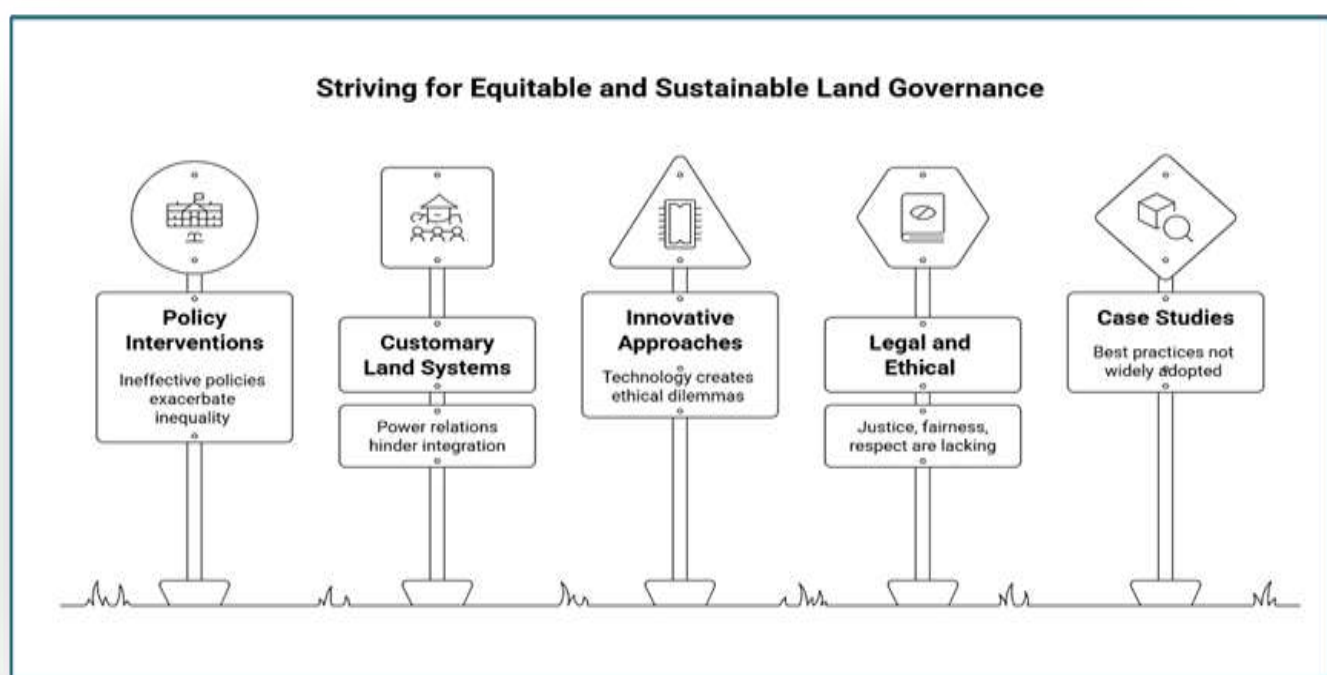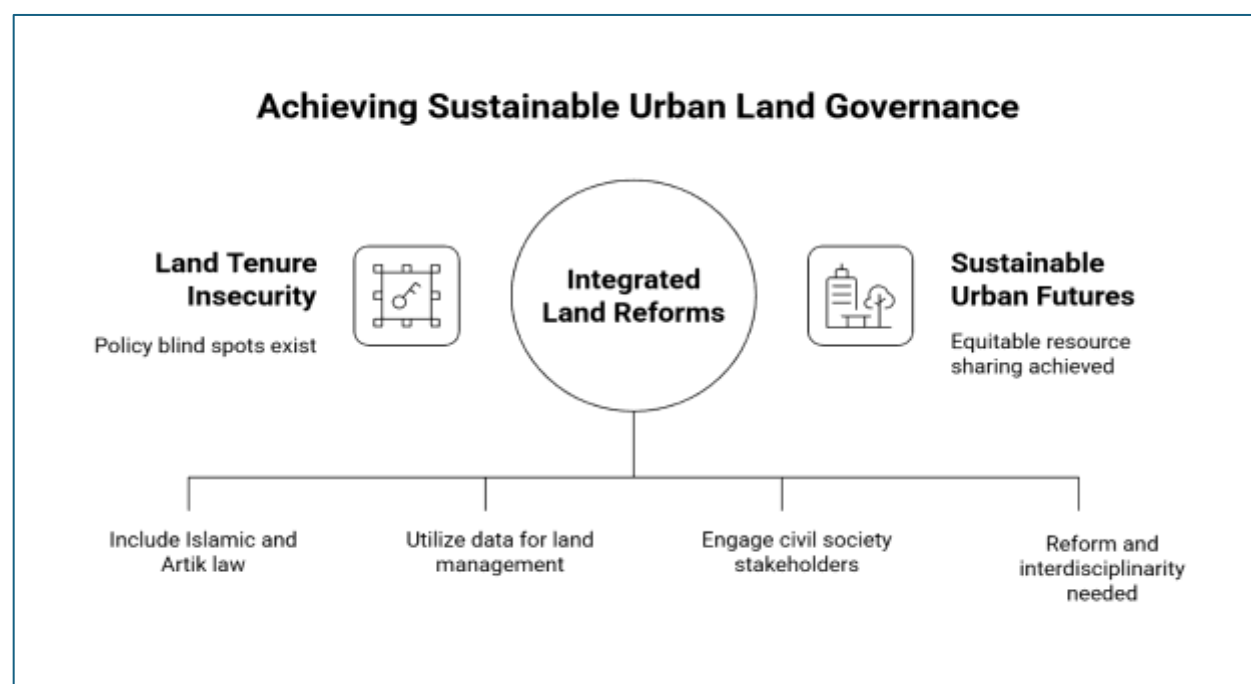

IMPLICATIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

From a governance perspective, in the future we must take a team-based approach to tackling any issue, be it climate change, rapid urbanization or pressing social matters. As the latest technological innovations

increasingly emphasize transparency and accountability via distributed ledger systems such as blockchain, we are presented with an opportunity to reform administrative structures through integration and cooperation between previously siloed departments and agencies. Only by breaking down barriers can we maximize effectiveness and efficiency in policy implementation. In addition to ensuring participatory and flexible digital platforms that encourage input from all stakeholders, we must draft progressive gender policies aimed at economically and socially empowering women. Reforms should prioritize inclusive development through which all members of society can fairly and sustainably contribute to both progress and problem-solving.

CONCLUSION

To realize sustainable development and social equity, good urban land governance is important. The review highlights the need to incorporate multiple legal regimes, Islamic and Artik law, into formal institutional systems to resolve land tenure insecurity and policy blind spots. It underscores the necessity for an integrated set of reforms, new management models that utilize data-based land records, and citizen engagement through civil society and multiple stakeholders. Confronting new challenges – including climate change and accelerated urbanisation – demands ongoing adjustment, reform, and interdisciplinarity. In the end, ensuring inclusive, participatory, and sustainable land management processes is essential for equitable sharing of resources and environmental conservation leading to resilient and sustainable urban futures.

Achieving Sustainable Urban Land Governance

Land Tenure Insecurity — Policy blind spots exist

Integrated Land Reforms

Sustainable Urban Futures — Equitable resource sharing achieved

Include Islamic and Artik law | Utilize data for land management | Engage civil society stakeholders | Reform and interdisciplinarity needed

REFERENCES

1. Al-Dawoody, A., Winter, K. A., & Finegan, O. (2021). International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC): Management of the dead under Islamic law. Forensic Science International: Reports, 3, 100196.
2. Alegwu, L. A. (1983). Societal formation and the evolution of land tenure system in the Zaria emirate of Northern Nigeria. Agricultural Administration, 13(4), 239-248.
3. Al-Ossmi, L. H., & Ahmed, V. (2016). Land tenure administration: Towards a regulatory backdrop to land tenure in Iraq. Land Use Policy, 57, 250-264.
4. Blaikie, P. (2008). Land reform and social justice: Towards a rights-based approach. Geoforum, 39(2), 736-746.
5. Blaikie, P. (2008). The politics of land reform. Routledge.
6. de Caro, R., et al. (2024). The legal and ethical framework governing body donation in Europe. Annals of Anatomy - Anatomischer Anzeiger, 252, 152195.
7. Dey, J. (1982). Development planning in The Gambia: The gap between planners' and farmers' perceptions. World Development, 10(5), 377-396.

8. Galehan, J. (2019). Instruments of violence: Female suicide bombers of Boko Haram. International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice, 58, 113-123.

9. Galehan, J. (2019). Land registration reform in Kenya: Digitization and community engagement. Land Use Policy, 86, 105073.

10. Kar, S., Sinha, G. R., & Dwivedi, P. (2025). Rules and interactions around customary tree ownership in forested public lands: A qualitative study in Jharkhand, India. Forest Policy and Economics, 172, 103442.

11. Kevane, M. (1997). Land tenure and rental in Western Sudan. Land Use Policy, 14(4), 295-310.

12. Lastarria-Cornhiel, S. (1997). Impact of privatization on gender and property rights in Africa. World Development, 25(8), 1317-1333.

13. Maclin, J., Kelly, R., & Perks, R. (2017). Moving to the mines: Motivations of men and women for migration to artisanal and small-scale mining sites. Resources Policy, 51, 115-122.

14. Mostafa, M. (2003). The role of the state in managing urban land supply and prices in Egypt. Habitat International, 27(3), 429-458.

15. Naor, M., & Benenson, I. (2023). Land market regulation and urban planning: A comparative analysis. Journal of Urban Affairs, 45(2), 150-165.

16. Ngo, T. T., & Fashu, S. (2015). Land management technology interventions in developing urban areas. Journal of Land Use Science, 10(8), 955-972.

17. Ngo, T. T., & Fashu, S. (2015). Participatory GIS for inclusive land planning: Challenges and opportunities. Land Use Policy, 45, 156-164.

18. Noor, R., et al. (2024). The influence of technological advances on land governance: A review of innovations and challenges. Journal of Urban Technology, 31(1), 89-112.

19. On, L., et al. (2024). Innovations in supply chain and infrastructure in urban contexts. Transportation Research Part E: Logistics and Transportation Review, 182, 103412.

20. Payne, G. (2001). Urban land tenure policy options: Titles or rights? Habitat International, 25(3), 415-429.

21. Rosti, B., Al-Azzawi, H. A., & Mohseni, S. (2023). Innovative strategies in land management and legal reforms. Land Use Policy, 130, 106447.

22. Rosti, B., Omidvar, A., & Monghasemi, N. (2020). Recycling of mine tailings for the geopolymers production: A systematic review. Case Studies in Construction Materials, 16, e00933.

23. Sabar, A., Zabbey, N., & Kabari, S. (2023). Customary land management and integration strategies. Journal of Rural Studies, 104, 77-86.

24. Sardar, Z. (1995). Alt.civilizations.faq cyberspace as the darker side of the West. Futures, 27(7), 777-794.

25. Treviño, M., & Murillo-Sandoval, P. J. (2021). Land governance models in Latin America: Lessons from community participatory planning. Resources Policy, 74, 102341.

26. Treviño, M., & Murillo-Sandoval, P. J. (2021). Uneven consequences: Gendered impacts of shrimp aquaculture development on mangrove dependent communities. Ocean & Coastal Management, 210, 105688.

27. Wan Marhaini, W. A., & Hanifa, M. H. (2019). Are non-Muslims willing to patronize Islamic financial services? Journal of Islamic Marketing, 10(3), 743-758.

28. Woś, B., Tahsin, M., Mustafa, A., Pietrzykowski, M., & Frouz, J. (2023). Soil carbon storage in unreclaimed post-mining sites estimated by a chronosequence approach. CATENA, 220, 106664.

29. Zahreddine, A., & El Ayoubi, M. (2023). Land tenure conflicts and social disruption: Evidence from urban settings. Journal of Urban Affairs, 45(4), 567-582.